United Nations A/CONF.207/INF/1

# International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

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**Port Louis, Mauritius**
**10-14 January 2005**

## Information for participants

### Site and dates of the International Meeting

1. The International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States will be held from 10 to 14 January 2005 at the Swami Vivekananda International Convention Centre in Les Pailles, Mauritius.

### Opening meeting

2. The formal opening of the International Meeting will take place on Monday, 10 January 2005, at 10 a.m., in Conference Room 1 of the Convention Centre.

3. In order that the opening meeting of the International Meeting may begin punctually, participants are requested to be seated in the Plenary Hall by 9.45 a.m.

### Protocol arrangements

4. Each head of State/Government will be received at the Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam International Airport in Mauritius by the Chief of Protocol of the United Nations or a representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and a representative of the Government of Mauritius. All delegations are requested to communicate the arrival details of heads of State/heads of Government/heads of delegations to the Chief of Protocol of the United Nations in New York (fax: (212) 963-1921), with a copy to M. I. Dossa, Chief of Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Port Louis (fax: (230) 208-8087) as soon as possible. Heads of delegations at the cabinet minister level will be received at the airport by an official of the Government of Mauritius. Special facilities and a help desk will be set up at the airport by the Mauritius authorities to assist the delegates for a quick clearance. Protocol arrangements for the visits of heads of State or Government during the conference will be coordinated in Port Louis by Paulose T. Peter (fax: (212) 963-1921), in close cooperation with officials of the Mauritius Government and the United Nations Security and Safety Services.

### Entry visas

5. Most of the countries participating in the Conference do not require a visa for Mauritius. For those who require a visa, arrangements will be made for a visa to be delivered on arrival. However, nationals of certain countries will require a visa

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before travelling to Mauritius and therefore delegations are advised to check with Mauritius authorities.

**Credentials**

6. Original letters of credentials issued by the head of State or Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs of a participating State should be addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and must be forwarded to Daphna Shraga, Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, or hand-delivered to her at the Convention Centre during the International Meeting. A copy of the credentials must be submitted to the Chief of Protocol, Protocol and Liaison Service, Room S-201 until 20 December 2004 (fax. (212) 963-1921) or after that date faxed to Port Louis (fax: (230) 208-4871) or delivered directly to the Protocol Registration/ Accreditation Unit, located at Clos St. Louis, after 1 January 2005. Any additional list submitted should be clearly marked to indicate the exact addition, deletion or correction to the lists submitted earlier.

7. As stated in the draft provisional rules of procedure of the International Meeting, delegations of each State participating in the Conference and of the European Commission shall consist of a head of delegation and such other accredited representatives, alternate representatives and advisers as may be required.

8. The credentials of representatives will be examined by the Credentials Committee, which will report its findings to the International Meeting. Following past practice, duly certified lists of participants may serve in special circumstances as **temporary** credentials of delegations.

**Provisional list of delegations**

9. Since the Protocol and Liaison Service has been authorized to oversee the publication of the provisional lists of delegations to the International Meeting, delegations are urged to communicate as soon as possible the names and functional titles of all the participating delegates to the Protocol and Liaison Service.

**Protocol accreditation**

10. The Accreditation Centre will be located at Clos St. Louis, near the Convention Centre. The working hours will be as follows:

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| Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 4, 5 and 6 January | 9 a.m.-5 p.m. |
| Friday, 7 January | 9 a.m.-8 p.m. |
| Saturday and Sunday, 8 and 9 January | 10 a.m.-8 p.m. |
| (opening hours depending on time of pre-conference consultations) | |
| Monday and Tuesday, 10 and 11 January | 9 a.m.-6 p.m. |
| Wednesday and Thursday, 12 and 13 January | 8 a.m.-8 p.m. |
| Friday, 14 January | 8 a.m.-5 p.m. |

**Issuance of passes**

11. Access to the Convention Centre premises will be granted only to persons in possession of an appropriate identification card. Individual identity cards with

photographs of the bearers will be issued to delegates, starting on 4 January 2005, by the Protocol Registration/Accreditation Unit located at Clos St. Louis.

12. A copy of the credentials or a comprehensive list of participants, to whom passes are to be issued, signed either by the Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York or by the head of Embassy of the sending authority in Port Louis, should be forwarded in advance to the Chief of Protocol, Protocol and Liaison Service in New York (Attn: Marybeth Curran) before 20 December 2004, and afterwards to the United Nations Protocol Accreditation Unit in Mauritius. All written requests for passes submitted by 20 December 2004 in New York, together with two passport-size colour photographs attached and the completed accreditation form SG.6 (Registration of Members of Delegations), will be processed and be ready for issuance by 4 January 2005 at the Protocol Accreditation Unit in Port Louis. Photographs may be transmitted electronically in JPG format to curran@un.org only until 20 December 2004. Delegates are reminded to clearly identify the photographs with names when electronically transmitted in order to avoid confusion. Grounds passes will be issued only upon presentation of a valid proof of identity, such as a national passport. Request for the issuance of grounds passes in the absence of legally acceptable accreditation documents will not be considered by the Protocol Registration/Accreditation Unit. Spouses are entitled to the same type of pass as principals.

13. Heads of State or Government and spouses thereof will be offered special VIP passes without photographs, upon receipt by the Protocol Registration/Accreditation Unit of an appropriate request to that effect.

14. Members of the parties accompanying heads of State or Government will be issued appropriate grounds passes, in accordance with their designation, upon prior written request.

15. Special VIP passes with photographs will be issued to cabinet ministers or their equivalent upon submission of two passport-size photographs of the dignitary to the Protocol Registration/Accreditation Unit at least 24 hours in advance. Delegations are urged to send the photographs to the Protocol and Liaison Service in New York as soon as possible but only until 20 December 2004, and thereafter to the Accreditation Unit at the Convention Centre after 1 January 2005. No VIP passes will be issued to deputy ministers, members of legislative bodies or Ambassadors.

**Seating arrangements in Plenary Hall**

16. Additional special access cards may be required for admission to the Plenary Hall/round tables, in which case an announcement will be made in the *Journal* published on-site, and such access cards can be collected from the Protocol Accreditation Unit.

**Security arrangements**

17. Delegations are advised to contact Mr. P. Valaydon, Director-General of VIP Security Unit (Tel: (230) 696-0159; fax: (230) 696-0119; Mobile: (230) 258-0191) for security arrangements outside the premises of the Convention Centre.

**Programme of meetings**

18. The programme of meetings will be printed in the *Journal*, which will be issued on a daily basis and will specify conference rooms and times of meetings.

19. Morning meetings will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and afternoon meetings from 3 to 6 p.m. except during the high-level segment on Thursday, 13 and Friday, 14 January, when morning meetings are scheduled to start at 9 a.m. and afternoon meetings at 3 p.m. (round tables will begin at 3 p.m. on Thursday and at 10 a.m. on Friday; for more details, including the establishment of the Main Committee and the high-level segment, see A/CONF.207/4).

**Seating arrangements**

20. At the opening of the International Meeting and at subsequent meetings of the plenary in Conference Room 1, each government delegation will be assigned four seats, two seats at table and two seats behind.

21. In Conference Room 2 of the Convention Centre, each government delegation will have two seats, one seat at table and one seat behind.

22. Specifically identified seating facilities will be available for other participants at the International Meeting.

**Languages of the International Meeting**

23. Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish are the official languages of the International Meeting.

24. Official documents of the International Meeting will be made available in the languages of the International Meeting.

**Interpretation services**

25. Statements made in any of the six official languages will be interpreted into the other official languages. Any representative may, in accordance with rule 53 of the provisional rules of procedure, make a statement in a language other than a language of the International Meeting. In such cases, the delegation should provide either an interpretation or a written text of the statement in one of the official languages. That interpretation or written text will be considered by the Secretariat to represent the official text of the statement and will be used by United Nations interpreters as the basis for interpretation into the other official languages.

26. It may be recalled that there will be interpretation services for a total of two simultaneous meetings in the morning and two in the afternoon. The servicing of all official meetings, extensions of official meetings beyond their normal duration, or the provision of interpretation services to regional or other group meetings should therefore be arranged within that framework.

27. Meetings other than those of United Nations bodies, such as meetings of regional or interest groups, will be accommodated according to the availability of meeting rooms and services. Requests for meeting services should be directed to Jane Pittson, Deputy Coordinator of Conference Services.

**Circulation of prepared statements**

28. Delegations wishing to circulate their speeches to all participants are requested to provide 350 copies to the Conference Officer, who will be located in the Conference Room. All texts should be delivered before the speaker takes the floor, preferably at the start of the meeting. International Meeting participants are reminded that the Secretariat will not be in a position to offer reproduction services for such texts.

29. If written texts are provided in more than one official language, delegations should indicate clearly which of those texts is to be accepted as the official text. Furthermore, in order to avoid confusion delegations should also specify whether that official text is to be "checked against delivery" or will be read out as written.

30. Delegations who wish to make their speeches available to the media in hard copy should provide a minimum of 300 copies to the documents counter in the Media Centre.

**Distribution of official documents**

31. The main documents distribution counter will be located in the Atrium on the ground level.

32. Each delegation will be assigned an individual box at the documents distribution counter, in which copies of all official documents issued during the Conference will be placed. Delegations are reminded that those document boxes or pigeonholes are exclusively for the distribution of official International Meeting documentation and may not be used for the circulation of any other papers or documents.

33. To determine the exact requirements, each delegation is requested to advise the documents distribution counter of its daily requirements in terms of the number of copies of each document it wishes to receive during the International Meeting and the language desired. The quantity requested should be sufficient to cover all requirements since it will not be possible to provide complete sets of documents after the International Meeting.

34. Accredited representatives of the media will be able to obtain official International Meeting documents at the Media Centre located in the lower level of the Convention Centre.

**Receipt and circulation of other documents**

35. Other documents that Governments and organizations may wish to make available to International Meeting participants should be provided by those Governments and organizations in appropriate languages and quantities. It is suggested that Governments and organizations make approximately 500 copies available in English, with smaller numbers of the other official languages if those are provided. The Secretariat cannot undertake the reproduction, translation or distribution of such documents.

36. It would be greatly appreciated if two copies of each such document could be forwarded to Samira Loschiavo, Documents Submission Officer. They will be listed in an information note to be circulated at the Conference.

**Media facilities**

37. A Media Centre for the use of all journalists accredited to cover the International Meeting will be located in the lower level of the Convention Centre.

38. The plenary sessions and other activities will be broadcast live into the Media Centre and by closed-circuit television monitors located throughout the Conference site. Audio-visual and sound feeds of the plenary sessions, press conferences and other events will be provided to broadcasters live on request, free of charge. Plug-in recording facilities will be available.

39. A documents counter will provide journalists with all International Meeting documents, as well as copies of daily press releases in English and French, covering the plenary meetings. They will also be made available electronically on the following web site: www.un.org/smallislands2005 or www.sidsmauritius2005.mu.

40. Details concerning press facilities and media accreditation are contained in a separate press release issued by the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat (see press release note No. 5908, dated 2 December 2004).

**Press conferences and media interviews**

41. Daily press briefings for journalists will be held at 12 noon by the Spokesperson for the International Meeting. All briefings will take place in the Media Centre Briefing Room. Heads of State, Government and delegation, or senior United Nations officials will hold press conferences. The location and list of the press conferences will be announced daily.

42. Interviews may be arranged in advance by calling the Office of the Spokesperson for the International Meeting. Arrangements may also be made through staff at the Information Desk. Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) will provide studio facilities on a commercial basis.

43. A pre-session briefing for journalists will be held on Friday, 7 January 2005, in the Media Centre Briefing Room, after the flag-raising ceremony.

**Non-governmental organizations**

44. Civil society representatives will have a designated area on the lower level for their use during the conference.

**Side events and related activities**

45. Side events and partnerships activities will be held inside the Convention Centre. Side events will be held in between and after official meetings, from 1.15 p.m. to 2.45 p.m. and from 6.15 p.m. to 7.45 p.m. Partnerships activities will be held in parallel with official meetings, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

46. In addition, parallel events and other related activities will be organized in Freeport Exhibition Centre, which is located near the Convention Centre.

47. Side events are open to all accredited participants in the International Meeting. A schedule of side events, partnerships activities and parallel events will be posted on the official International Meeting web site. Please refer to the *Journal* for up-to-date information on the activities scheduled for each day.

**Other useful information for participants**

*Inoculation*

48. No vaccinations are needed unless travelling through yellow fever-infected areas, in which case a vaccination against that is required.

49. Medical facilities adequate for first aid in emergencies will be provided within the International Meeting area. For serious emergencies, the Government will ensure immediate transportation and admission to a hospital. The Government will not be responsible for medical costs.

*Currency, cheques and credit cards*

50. The Mauritius currency is the Mauritian rupee, 28 to the United States dollar. United States dollars are accepted in many places. There is a 15 per cent value added tax on all purchases, including hotel bills. Foreign currencies and foreign currency travellers cheques may be exchanged at banks and most hotels.

51. Banking facilities will be open during normal International Meeting hours. Foreign currencies will be exchanged at the exchange rate at the time of transaction.

52. Credit cards, such as Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Diners Club and the JCB Card, are widely accepted in Mauritius. Foreign currency travellers cheques, credit cards or cash may be used to pay hotel and other expenses in Mauritius.

*Electricity*

53. The standard electricity in Mauritius is 220 volts. Most modern hotels have standard British sockets.

*Cellphones*

54. GSM cellphones do work but must be dual band.